

Coastal Habitat Conservation in a Changing Climate: Strategies and Tools in the Mid-Atlantic Region

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Issue: Coastal habitats in the U.S. and the valuable ecosystem services that they provide are already impacted by multiple stresses, and climate change will further exacerbate these existing challenges.¹ Coastal habitat managers and other decision makers at the federal, state, and local level need additional information, tools, and capacity to support the management and conservation of coastal habitats under changing climatic conditions.

In addition, NOAA has identified the need to improve its ability to address the impacts of a changing climate on coastal ecosystems and to incorporate climate change into its ocean and coastal stewardship mandate responsibilities.² While these efforts are underway at a variety of levels, additional effort is needed to build capacity, experience, and collaboration. In an effort to begin to address this and the needs of coastal habitat managers and other decision makers for climate related tools, information and capacity, NOAA is working with its partners to develop region-focused workshops on climate change and coastal habitats.

Action: As part of a series of regional workshops, conduct a two-day workshop focused on tools and strategies to assess vulnerability and develop adaptation plans for coastal habitats in the U.S. Mid-Atlantic (NY, NJ, DE, VA, MD, DC) region.

Goals:

- Provide coastal habitat managers in the Mid-Atlantic with tools and information, initiate development of strategies for incorporating climate change into the conservation of coastal habitats, and better understand the resource needs of the community.
- Increase understanding of the needs of habitat managers to inform the development of climate related activities within NOAA and its partners.

Target Audience: Representatives from federal, state, tribal, and nongovernmental organizations directly involved in the planning and implementation of coastal habitat

¹ Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States, T.R. Karl, J.M. Melillo, & T.C. Peterson, (editors). Cambridge University Press, 2009.

² R.B. Griffis, R.L. Feldman, N.K. Beller-Simms, K.E. Osgood, & N. Cyr, (editors.). 2008. Incorporating Climate Change into NOAA's Stewardship Responsibilities for Living Marine Resources and Coastal Ecosystems: A Strategy for Progress. U.S. Dep. Commerce, NOAA Tech Memo NMFS-F/SPO-95.

conservation activities in the Mid-Atlantic, including habitat protection and restoration efforts (e.g. acquisition, easements, management, regulatory consultations, permitting).

Outcomes: Workshop participants will:

1. Identify and prioritize key climate impacts for coastal habitats in the Mid-Atlantic
2. Examine various tools, best practices, and specific examples for assessing vulnerability and taking action to promoting resilience and adaptation of coastal habitats to a changing climate
3. Initiate development of collaborative conservation strategies for coastal habitats that incorporate climate change information
4. Identify priority needs and possible solutions for improving conservation of coastal habitats in a changing climate

For more information and interest in participating and/or partnering, please contact:

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